

Message Text

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PAGE 01 THE HA 03825 031148Z

53

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SWF-02 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-11 FRB-03 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CIEP-03 SP-03

STR-08 TRSE-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 PA-04

PRS-01 USIA-15 AGR-20 DRC-01 /140 W

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P 031035Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4079

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS PRIORITY UNN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, NL

SUBJ: DUTCH FARMERS DEMONSTRATE OVER INCOME SQUEEZE

1. TAKING A LEAD FROM THEIR FRENCH AND BELGIAN BRETHREN, AND FROM LEFT-WING ACTION GROUPS IN DUTCH SOCIETY, HOLLAND'S NORMALLY DOCILE FARMERS MOUNTED MASSIVE DEMONSTRATIONS AUG 2 THROUGHOUT NETHS BUT PARTICULARLY IN RHINE-MAAS BASIN AND IN CITIES OF GRONINGEN AND HAGUE. LINES OF TRACTORS WERE USED TO BLOCK SUPER-HIGHWAYS AT VARIOUS POINTS AND TO DENY ACCESS AND EGRESS FROM CITIES. DEMONSTRATIONS WERE NOISY AND HEATED, BUT NO VIOLENCE HAS BEEN REPORTED. FURTHER DEMONSTRATION IS PLANNED FOR UTRECHT AUG 10.

2. IN NEGOTIATIONS DURING DAY WITH ACTING MINAG BOERSAM, FARM

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PAGE 02 THE HA 03825 031148Z

LEADERS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE DEMANDED THAT DUTCH CABINET TAKE

ACTION WITHIN TWO WEEKS TO IMPROVE LAGGING FARM INCOMES BY GRANTING (1) EXEMPTION FROM VALUE ADDED TAX ON FARM MACHINERY, FERTILIZER AND OTHER PRODUCTION ESSENTIALS, (2) POSTPONEMENT OF INCOME TAX PAYMENTS, (3) RECONSIDERATION OF DECISION TO INCREASE PRICES OF NATURAL GAS TO GLASSHOUSE FARMERS BY 50 PERCENT OVER TWO YEARS AND (4) INCREASE OF 4 PERCENT IN FOOD PRICES. BOERSMA REPORTEDLY RESPONDED BY PROMISING THAT CABINET WOULD CONSIDER THESE DEMANDS AUG 8 BY WHICH TIME MINAG VAN DER STEE WILL HOPEFULLY HAVE RETURNED FROM INTERRUPTED VACATION. BOERSMA EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT REAL SOLUTION CAN ONLY LIE IN EC ACTION UNDER CAP, A VIEWPOINT WHICH CHRISTIAN FARMERS UNION LEADER ZIJLSTRA PUBLICLY ENDORSED. BOTH MINISTER AND FARM LEADERS URGED FARMERS TO ABSTAIN FROM ANY FURTHER DEMONSTRATIONS, PEACEFUL OR OTHERWISE, PENDING CABINET REVIEW.

3. BOTH GOVERNMENT AND FARM LEADERS AGREE THAT FARM INCOMES HAVE BEEN CUT SIGNIFICANTLY DURING CURRENT CROP YEAR STARTING APRIL DUE TO HIGHER COSTS FOR FEESTUFFS, FUEL AND FERTILIZERS, UP AN AVERAGE 10 PERCENT FOR FIELD CROP AND DAIRY FARMERS AND 16 PERCENT FOR GLASSHOUSE FARMERS.

4. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER NEXT WEEK WHEN GON INTENTIONS BECOME CLEARER. OUR PRESENT JUDGEMENT, HOWEVER, IS THAT GON WILL DO LITTLE TO MEET FARMERS DEMANDS EXCEPT AS PART OF BROADER EC COMMON APPROACH.
TANGUY

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